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## ***Whitworth Denied Bail Again Despite Letters on Good Character***

**By STEPHEN ENGELBERG***Special to The New York Times*

SAN FRANCISCO, June 18 — Jerry A. Whitworth, a retired Navy enlisted man, pleaded not guilty today to charges that he sold secrets to the Soviet Union. The authorities assert he was part of a spy ring run by John A. Walker Jr.

Wearing a suede jacket, blue slacks and checkered shirt, Mr. Whitworth stood before Magistrate Frederick J. Woelflen, his hands clasped behind his back. The plea was entered for him by the magistrate.

Magistrate Woelflen refused to reconsider his ruling last week that Mr. Whitworth be held without bail. He said he had not been swayed by letters relatives had sent him attesting to Mr. Whitworth's good character.

A Federal grand jury charged Monday in a one-count indictment that Mr. Whitworth received at least \$328,000 for selling secrets to the Russians through Mr. Walker, a close friend. Mr. Walker, his brother Arthur and son, Michael, all present or former Navy men, have also been charged with espionage.

Mr. Walker and Mr. Whitworth met about 14 years ago while they were stationed in San Diego at the Navy's communications training school, and the indictment charges that Mr. Whitworth passed secrets to Mr. Walker for at least eight years.

### **Damage Assessments Differ**

Jim Larson, one of two lawyers representing Mr. Whitworth, said after the brief hearing that the "hysterical" atmosphere surrounding the case might make it difficult to hold a fair trial. He said military officials in Washington had offered differing assessments of the severity of security breaches a spy ring might have caused.

Navy officials have said that if the men passed the Russians all the secret information they had access to, the breach would be one of the most severe since World War II. Other experts, however, have said that some of the information would be swiftly outmoded.

Mr. Larson said Mr. Whitworth had not cooperated with the prosecutors and planned to mount a vigorous de-

fense. "I would say he's holding up well," Mr. Larson said. "Of course, he's extremely isolated. He's very determined to conduct the strongest fight possible against the charges."

The lawyer declined to say what strategy he would use to defend Mr. Whitworth but said he probably would not seek a change in venue.

Another attorney for Mr. Whitworth, Louis Hiken, said the relationship between Mr. Walker and Mr. Whitworth was strictly that of close friends who went sailing together.

Mr. Larson took issue with the repeated assertions by the local United States Attorney, Joseph P. Russoniello, who said that the espionage ring run by Mr. Walker was the most significant since the conviction and execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg in 1953.

Mr. Larson also criticized public officials who have called for the restoration of the death penalty in espionage cases. "All of this taints the atmosphere in which the case will be tried and makes it more difficult to get a fair trial," he said.